

6 News

Sky's the limit for TV campaign

Penny Williams

A MULTI-MILLION pound terrestrial TV campaign is backing satellite broadcaster Sky.

It is Sky's first national TV run in four years, with two 40-second commercials appearing across ITV, and Channels 4 and Channel 5 in peak viewing spots throughout spring and summer.

Sky hopes the campaign will boost its presence in the run-up to digital services.



• SKY today launched a digital information hotline for retailers on 01506 488888. Operators will answer questions on digital TV. They will also mail out information to dealers interested in becoming agents for Sky satellite DTV.

Dyson admits clogged filters give less suction

Sophie Mason

DYSON bagless vacuum cleaners can lose suction through clogging, commercial director Martin McCourt has admitted.

Speaking on local BBC station Three Counties Radio on April 16, Mr McCourt said: "The suction will drop if you don't replace your filter if it's time to replace it. In all vacuum cleaners, including the Dyson, the filter is a separate part of the process."

Mr McCourt's words were in direct contrast to the claims Dyson makes in its advertising: "100% suction, 100% of the time" and "no loss of suction". The company has concentrated on the drop in suction that occurs with cleaners that use a bag when the bag is full.

Mr McCourt told ERT: "The conversation was a playful exchange."

"There comes a time when you must change the filter, then you have another three months of uninterrupted performance."

Mr McCourt's admission fol-

lowed an ad campaign by fellow cleaner manufacturer Miele, which claimed that Miele's vacs with bags have greater suction than Dyson's dual-cyclone products even when the bags are full (ERT, April 16, page 5). Miele chief executive Michael Jeanes was also on the radio programme.

Dyson has responded to the ad campaign by sending Miele a solicitor's letter threatening legal action.

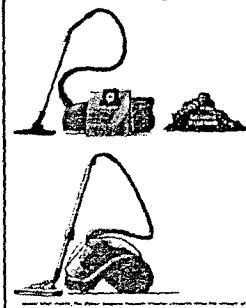
Dyson alleges that the tests used by Miele as a basis for challenging Dyson's claims were not consistent with the IEC 312 standard for testing vacuum cleaners because they used the wrong sort of dust.

Mr Jeanes has replied, through his company's solicitor, but would not disclose the contents of the letter.

He told ERT: "We are not leading the thing, if any proceedings are started it will be Dyson that starts them."

Meanwhile, Hoover has joined the row with a statement which said: "Independent tests carried out for Hoover on up-

The evidence against vacuum cleaners with bags keeps piling up.



Dyson: Controversial advertising

right cleaners support and confirm the Miele findings.

"Dyson has continually given a message of 100% of suction, 100% of the time which is misleading, since Dyson's '100%' is significantly less than other vacuum cleaners."

Mr McCourt said: "Miele has launched an aggressive attack on Dyson, and Hoover wants to jump on the bandwagon."

Focus on digital

Despite the enormous advantages of DAB over FM, it's important not to lose sight of the fact that the radio is potentially useless if not enough attention is paid to that small piece of wire, the aerial.

The placement of the aerial in a house or on the car is of utmost importance.

In a house it's simple: the aerial needs to be as high as possible and with as clear a view as possible of the "outside world" and preferably a local DAB transmitter.

On a car, it follows the same simple principle – the higher the better.

It's no good putting your aerial on the car bumper or building it within the "cage" of the car, because you could lose a high proportion of the signal. The position recommended by engineers is the centre of the roof, which gives the best omni-directionality.

But who wants to drill a big hole in centre of the roof of their brand new BMW? A good

Miles Eames recommends that, to enjoy the full benefits that digital radio has to offer, you should not overlook the humble aerial



compromise is to position the aerial at the front of the car roof, above the rear-view mirror, or on the back of the roof, above the rear tailgate.

The design of the aerial itself is also crucial: to best receive Band III services on DAB, it should measure 30.5 cm from base to tip.

It also needs a decent metal ground-plane. In the research work we have been undertaking at the BBC, we have had

particular problems with glass-mount aerials. The first time I heard digital radio, I had one of these installed and it sounded awful. I drove around for the next week thinking the worst about DAB; until I realised that the aerial was positioned incorrectly, too far down the side window of the car. It also seemed to suffer from a loss of omni-directionality, which appeared to be a result of one of the elements being obscured by the metal of the vehicle.

Replacing it with a fixed aerial at the front of the roof of the car, I was astounded at the difference in reception. The aerial is often the last thing the customer thinks about, but it's probably one of the most vital parts of any radio system.

We need to be aware of its importance so that consumers will fully enjoy the benefits that digital radio offers.

Miles Eames is project assistant for BBC Digital Radio